

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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RAMMOHUN ROY.

"I TENDER you my humble thanks," said Rammohun Roy, "for inviting me to adopt the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; but I am sorry to find that I am unable to benefit by this advice. After I have long relinquished every idea of a plurality of Gods, or of the persons of the Godhead, taught under different systems of modern Hindooism, I cannot conscientiously and consistently embrace one of a similar nature though greatly refined by the religious reformations of modern times; since whatever arguments can be adduced against a plurality of Gods, strike with equal force against the doctrine of a plurality of persons of the Godhead; and on the other hand, whatever excuse may be pleaded in favour of a plurality of persons of the Deity, can be offered with equal propriety in defence of polytheism." And on another occasion he added, "I have now every hope that the truths of Christianity will not be much longer kept hidden under the veil of heathen doctrines and practices, gradually introduced among the followers of Christ, since many lovers of truth are zealously engaged in rendering the religion of Jesus clear from corruptions." The Saviour said, "They shall come from the east and the west and sit down in my Kingdom." We never knew a case which more strikingly verified these words than that of this distinguished and learned man.

He appears from the age of fifteen to have been an earnest seeker after religious truth. He was far from being satisfied with the religion of his ancestors, and left home when a boy to see the development of religious life in other nations. He was very dissatisfied with the forms of faith and worship found in the East, and suffered some persecutions among his friends and among strangers because of his aver-

sion to the popular religion. His mother seems to have sympathised with him and thought him right after some little time of estrangement; for she said before she set out on her last pilgrimage to Juggernaut, where she died, "Rammohun, you are right; but I am a weak woman, and am grown too old to give up those observances which are a comfort to me."

He was known to be one of the most learned, honest, and earnest of students of the Old and New Testament. He studied the Hebrew and Greek scriptures that he might escape being misled by translations. And what a testimony to the scriptural foundation of the Unitarian faith, that this unbiassed and careful student became a Unitarian Christian, purely through the study of the Bible. He came to England in 1831, and was the guest and companion of many of our brethren. He evinced a lively interest in everything that appertained to England's welfare and honour. Several of our Unitarian meetings he had an opportunity of attending and was deeply interested in the reformation of religion. His course was soon terminated, for he was seized with a fever when at Bristol, and after a few days' illness it proved fatal. Miss Carpenter, in her recently published life of Rammohun Roy, gives some interesting details from the private journal of Mr. Estlin. "It was a beautiful moonlight night; on one side of the window, as Mr. Hare, Miss Kiddell and I looked out of it, was the calm rural midnight scene; on the other, this extraordinary man dying. I shall never forget the moment, the young Rajah was generally holding his hand. He became worse and worse, and at twenty-five minutes past two he breathed his last." He repeatedly said during his brief illness he would not recover. He expressed his sense of kind-

ness to all around him, conversed little, but was often engaged in prayer. He died on the 27th of September, 1833, in the fifty-ninth year of his age.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

THE GREAT LAW.

At the period of the first race of the Frank kings, while the greater part of the people under them were still ignorant of Christ, lived an old man named Novaire, who had received the good news, and had applied himself to understand it.

Abandoning the guilty pleasures of the world, he had retired to a solitary hill, and had constructed there a little hut, where he lived alone, with no other occupation than that of enlarging and elevating his soul.

Now it came to pass, that by force of meditation and prayer the veil which conceals the invisible world from man was drawn aside for Novaire, and he was allowed to perceive the avenues of heaven; but, nevertheless, he lost not the sight of earth. He distinguished at one view the marvels of the sensible creation and the mysteries of the unseen world. His eye wandered over the woods, the prairies, the waters; rising higher, it encountered the space traversed by the messengers of God; then, still rising, the celestial abode guarded by the archangels. He heard, at the same moment, the murmuring of springs, the voices of cherubim, and the hosannas of the blest at the foot of the eternal throne. Angels brought him nourishment, and conversed with him at length on subjects unknown to man; thus the days flowed on in a perpetual enchantment.

Associated thus, while living, with pure spirits only, he felt, little by little, all earthly ambitions perish within him as the stars pale before the splendour of the noonday sun; and, proud that his intelligence was raised above the vulgar comprehension, he wished, by means of it, to penetrate the secrets of God. Listening to the sounds of life which form the eternal hymn of creation to the Creator, he repeated ceaselessly—

“Why cannot I know what the birds say in their songs, the breezes in their murmurs, the insects in their humming, the waves in their sighs, the angels in their celestial hymns? There should be

found the *great law* which governs the universe.”

But all the efforts of his mind to penetrate the mystery had been vain; he had gained nothing but pride and hardness of heart; for intelligence, increasing alone, resembles forest trees, which cannot extend their roots without drying up all around them; to remain benevolent and fruitful, it must be watered by the dews of the heart.

One day, when he had descended from his over-verdant hill to cross the valley—at that moment blasted by winter—he saw approaching him a troop of soldiers, who were conducting a criminal to the gallows. The peasants ran to see him pass, recounting his crimes aloud; but the condemned man smiled on hearing them, and, far from testifying any repentance, seemed to glory in the crime he had committed. At length, as he approached Novaire, he suddenly stopped, and cried, with a mocking air—

“Come, holy man, and bestow the kiss of peace on one about to die.”

But Novaire indignantly recoiled.

“Go on to thy death, wretch! Pure lips should not touch a sinner like thee.”

The criminal resumed his march without reply, and Novaire, still agitated, took the path to his hermitage. On arriving there he suddenly stopped stupified; the aspect of everything was changed. The trees, which the presence of angels had preserved in an eternal verdure, were now leafless like those of the valley; there, where a few short hours before blossomed the eglantine, shone now the hoar frost, and the shrivelled moss allowed everywhere the sterile rocks to be seen.

Novaire awaited the celestial messenger, who each day brought him his nourishment, to learn the cause of this change; but the messenger did not reappear; the invisible world was closed to his eyes, and he had fallen once more into the miseries and ignorance of humanity. He understood that God punished him, without divining the fault he had committed; yet he submitted without rebellion; and, kneeling on the hillside:—“Since I have offended thee, O, my Creator,” said he, “I ought, in expiation of my offence, to inflict a punishment upon myself. From this day forth I quit my retreat, and swear to march onward, reposing only at night,

until thou hast testified to me, by a visible sign, that I have merited thy mercy."

At these words Novaire took his hermit's bell, his breviary with iron clasps, his staff of hollywood; he girded his reins with a leathern girdle, fastened his sandals, and, casting a last look on the hillside, he directed his steps towards the savage peninsula, afterwards known by the name of Jesnétique.

Now in this country, to day covered with villages, farms, and harvest, no road was then visible, unless it might be a path opened by wild beasts. It was necessary to ford rivers, to cross marshes, to traverse thickets; scarcely finding, at great distances from each other, miserable dwellings, whose inhospitable masters often repulsed the traveller.

But Novaire suffered with serenity all this fatigue and all these privations. With but one object, his re-habilitation before God, he opposed to all suffering resignation; to all obstacles patience. In this way he arrived at the extremity of the peninsula, where, soon after, was built the celebrated abbey of Jumièges.

At this period a forest extended there, in which pirates were concealed, who, upon their light boats of basket-work, covered with skin, attacked the barques that ascended the river laden with valuable merchandise.

One evening, when the recluse was hurrying forward to reach the river bank, he came to a clearing, where four of these pirates were seated round a fire of reeds. On seeing him they rose, rushed towards him, and dragged him towards the fire to rob him. They took his bell, his book, his girdle, and his robe; and, seeing that he had nothing else, they were deliberating about releasing him when the oldest of them, named Toderick, suggested that they should keep him to row the boat for them, to which they assented.

Novaire was then bound with three chains: one for his feet, the other for his arms, the last for his body; and thus he became the slave of the pirates. He was to prepare their food, sharpen their arms, take care of their boat and conduct it, with no other compensation than blows and curses. Toderick, especially, showed himself without pity, joining mockery to cruelty by continually demanding of the

old man of what use the power of his God was to him.

One day the pirates attacked a barque which was descending the Seine, in which they hoped to find some rich merchandise; but it so happened that it was transporting a band of archers, who welcomed them with a flight of arrows so well directed that three of them were killed, and the fourth, who was Toderick, received an arrow in his breast.

Novaire then turned the boat towards the shore, which he succeeded in reaching. He was now free, and could easily have made his escape, but he felt himself seized by a holy pity for those who had made him suffer for so long a time. He buried the three dead pirates, and then advanced towards Toderick. The latter, judging Novaire by his own savage nature, thought that he was about to avenge himself, and said to him—

"Kill me quickly, without making me suffer."

But Novaire replied, "Far from wishing your life, I would rather purchase it at the price of my own."

The pirate was astonished and softened.

"That is henceforth in the power of no man," said he, "for I already feel the chill of death, which has seized upon my heart. If it is true that you wish me well, in spite of all I have made you suffer, give me a little water to slake my thirst."

Novaire ran to the nearest spring and brought some water to the wounded man. When he had drunk of it he looked upon the hermit and said—

"You have been good to him who has injured you; will you do still more, and accord the kiss of peace to a guilty wretch?"

"I will," said Novaire, "and may it become a blessing for thee!"

At these words he leaned over the pirate, who received the kiss of peace and died.

At the same instant a voice was heard in the air, which said—

"Novaire, thy trial is ended. God punished thee for refusing pity to the guilty. He now recompenses thee for having pardoned the sinner. All the treasures thou didst lose by hardness of heart thou hast regained by *charity*. Raise, now, thine eyes, and lend thine ears, for now canst thou, indeed, hear what say the sounds of earth and heaven."

The recluse, who had listened to the voice in silent amazement, raised his head. The trees, despoiled of their leaves by the blasts of winter, were clothed with the brightest verdure; the ice-bound streams had resumed their flow; the birds sang in the flowery hawthorn; while high up in the heavens angels were seen ascending and descending on the ladder of Jacob, cherubim passing upon the clouds, arch-angels clashing their flaming swords, and saints chanting their celestial hymns.

All these sounds formed but one harmonious choir of praise to the Creator, the burden of which was—

LOVE ONE ANOTHER !

Then Novaire bowed himself to the earth, and cried—

“Thanks, my God; now do I comprehend, for the first time, the GREAT LAW.”

WEARINESS AND REST.

WHEN our hearts are sad and weary
With the cares of life,
When the fight 'twixt sin and goodness
Seems unequal strife;

When the just are round us falling,
Early in the day,
When our friends are from us taken,
One by one, away;

Then it is we see the sadness
Of life's dreary road,
Then it is we feel the burden
Of our heavy load.

Seeming greater, Oh ! far greater
Than we well can bear,
For our slightest griefs press on us
Like a weight of care.

Oft we pray that God will take us
In His loving arms,
Take us speedily and place us
Far from earth's alarms.

But a voice within us sayeth
That this cannot be;
We must run our race here nobly,
Ere God's glory see.

In the place of those who leave us
There will rise still more,
And our friends, for whom we sorrow,
Are but “gone before.”

And we may, by patient striving,
Light our burden's weight,
Sail on, till our ship, in harbour,
Shall unload its freight.

Let us, then, in bitter trials,
Go on bravely still;
Never failing, ne'er repining,
Working out God's will.

And we shall be, on life's voyage,
Ever truly blest,
And at length, in God's own regions,
Find the perfect rest.

Halifax.

E. B.

ON THE DUTY OF TRYING TO SPREAD OUR OPINIONS.

MANY Unitarians argue that, because good men may be found among all sects, and of every variety of faith, therefore it is unnecessary—and, perhaps, even wrong—to unsettle their religious opinions by any controversial teaching, or by pointing out what we think the errors in their creeds. But, fortunately for us, the Apostles thought otherwise. They travelled through Judea and the neighbouring countries to try to spread the new religion, because they thought it more conducive to goodness and happiness than the old Paganism and the worship of a crowd of gods. Had not some of the successors to the Apostles inherited the same praiseworthy missionary zeal we English might at the present time have been Pagans, worshipping Woden and Thor. Let us never cease to be thankful that St. Augustine and his companions, who brought Christianity into England, did not think it wrong to make proselytes; and, again, let us be equally thankful to the Reformers in the time of Luther, who converted us from Popery. These men all thought it their duty to try and shake the old opinions, and to spread a purer faith. And ought not we to do the same for what we think a yet purer faith?

Some will quote against me the well-known lines of the poet, Pope, and say—

“For forms of faith let senseless bigots fight;
They can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

But in so reasoning they forget that good conduct and a virtuous life are very much brought about by right opinions, and that, though knowledge is not the same as goodness, yet knowledge leads to goodness, and ignorance leads to vice. Mistaken opinions lead to mistaken conduct; wrong opinions about God lead to wrong opinions about our duty; and the worship of a divided God, which we Unitarians more particularly oppose, carries with it some of the old errors of the worship of many gods. Men are not always logical and good reasoners; and perhaps we may say it is fortunate they are not, or else a false theology would assuredly, in every case, lead to false views of our duty to God and our neighbour. But, because a man's religion is often better than his theology, this should not lead us to make any truce

with error, which must in all cases have an injurious effect on the mind and conduct.

Those who would discourage religious controversy and dogmatic teaching sometimes say that we put theology too much in the foreground; they argue that history is not religion, and that biblical criticism is not religion. This is very true; but religion cannot exist without theology, true or false. Theology is as necessary to religion as the skeleton to the flesh which is supported by it, or as, in this life, the body is to the soul which inhabits it. And, again, theology, like every similar science, can be very imperfectly studied without the help of history and criticism. Hence, indeed, the value of the Bible, which teaches us how we have obtained our present religious opinions, which appear in the earlier books in a grosser form, and then purified in the later Hebrew prophets, and then again, further purified, in the New Testament. Hence, also, the value of ecclesiastical history, which teaches us how the religion of Jesus was corrupted among the Pagan nations who first received it, and yet further corrupted when it became part of an organised political scheme under the Popes of Rome, &c., and how a reform of these corruptions was begun by Luther in the sixteenth century, which is even yet going forward, and is likely to grow with the spread of education. It is the history of these successive corruptions and reforms that teaches us to look forward to further reform, and the manner in which they may be brought about.

To help on this great and much-needed reform in religion seems a special duty of the Unitarians. We are so fortunate as to possess—at least, we think we possess—more just views of God than the other sects that surround us; and, while thinking so, it seems to be a solemn duty to try and spread these opinions in every proper manner; such as by explanatory preaching, by lecturing on disputed points, by the circulation of doctrinal tracts, and by pointing out the mistakes in the authorised version of the Bible.

The chief theological errors which we Unitarians oppose are the Trinity, the Deity of Jesus Christ, the vindictive character of God, and the Atonement; and these doctrines, we have reason to believe,

have driven away one-half of the population from the churches and chapels of the kingdom. It is to this large class of persons, who belong to no religious sect whatever, that the Unitarians are particularly called upon to address themselves. These men, unlike the wealthier classes, are under no social influences which make them conform to a church against their judgment. Unitarianism is probably the only form of Christianity which they would be willing to accept; and they are perhaps unaware that there is such a body of Christians, teaching the very religion which many of them in their own hearts are craving for. Orthodoxy, in its various forms, they are more or less acquainted with; and they are resolutely opposed to its priestly claims, its sacramental ceremonies, its abstruse metaphysical propositions, and its uncharitable narrowness. Many of them, while rejecting these stumbling-blocks, regret that they are thereby shut out from the beneficial influences of a religious community; and if our simpler and more rational faith were made known to them we have reason to hope that they would receive it gladly. Let us, therefore, by all means accept the duty of making our theological opinions more widely known, and particularly to that large class who are at present on the outside of all churches.

Some of our friends who acknowledge this duty—and who would willingly, if they knew how, endeavour to bring the masses within the influence of social worship—ask why, in teaching what we believe to be simple Christianity, we should call it Unitarianism, and why we should take upon ourselves the unpopular name—the name, indeed, which drives many away from us, at the very time when we are trying to win men to our opinions? The answer to this, I think, is easy, namely, that the word Christianity, if used without further explanation, is now, unfortunately, understood by the million to mean those very Trinitarian doctrines which they deliberately reject; and, if we would get listened to when teaching our religion in its simplest form, we must give it a distinctive name, such as Unitarian Christianity, or some other name which shall be equally negative and equally offensive to those who hold the popular creeds, and which shall be an equal guarantee that we

are not going to preach to them the popular creeds. If, indeed, we are contented with going among the poor, with religious teaching in one hand and charitable gifts in the other, we may get listened to, and be useful without professing a distinctive theology; but, if we would win the more independent class of thinkers, and would build up new congregations, it can be done only by telling our hearers at the very outset that we, with them, wholly reject the conventional teaching of the popular churches. Let us, therefore, have no hesitation in boldly putting forward our distinctive name of Unitarian Christians, in the full belief that by so doing we shall more successfully spread a set of religious opinions which will be a blessing to all who receive them, and let us do so without regard to the unpopularity which now attaches to this name.

Moreover, experience has shown that to give a name to our theology is the surest and wisest method of bringing about the end we aim at. No set of opinions, no science, no subject whatever, can be taught without giving to it a distinctive name. Those who wish to teach the structure of the earth call what they teach geology; those who would give lessons on the heavenly bodies profess the science of astronomy; and the early converts to the religion of Jesus soon found it convenient to call one another by the name of Christians, although that name had been first given to them as a reproach.

The Apostle Paul besought his young friend Timothy to guard carefully the charge which had been entrusted to him, namely, the religious opinions which he had been taught, and which it was his duty to teach to others. Let us do the same with our Unitarianism. The same Apostle says that he glories in bearing the name of Christ, which was then blamed by one class of his friends and ridiculed by another. Christianity was then among the wealthy and well-educated as ungentle as dissent is now; it was as distasteful to the zealots among whom the Apostle had been educated as is Unitarianism to the clergy and their followers. But the Apostle was not ashamed of it; he did not shrink from avowing it and trying to spread it. Let us be equally careful not to act as if we were ashamed of the name of Unitarian; let us try to spread it by

our owning it and teaching it, and to make it honourable by our conduct. If we can do but little for it, either by writing or by speech, if we can spare no money for its support, we can at least give it our countenance. So long as a religious opinion has but a few followers they are sometimes made uncomfortable by professing it. Hence, everyone who openly joins them in making what the Apostle calls the good profession lessens their discomfort by sharing the unpopularity; and, without being anxious whether in the present generation, or in how many generations, we may succeed in removing from Unitarianism the unpopularity which at present attaches to it, let us never shrink from bearing our testimony to what we think an important religious truth, of openly acknowledging that we are Unitarians, and in trying to spread our opinions.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP.

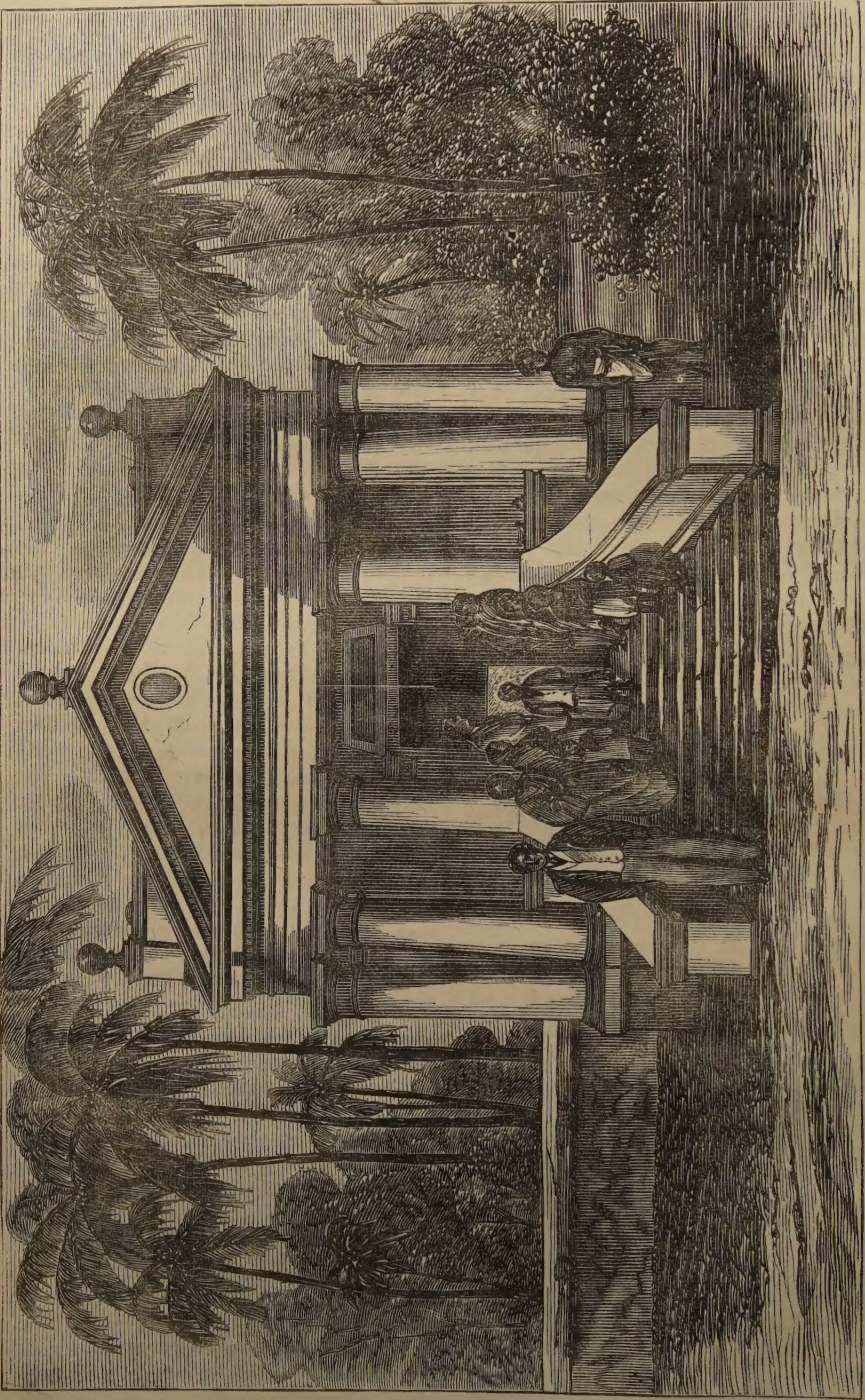
A MAN in India was accused of stealing sheep. He was brought before the judge, and the supposed owner of the sheep was also present. Both claimed the sheep, and had witnesses to prove their claims, so that it was not easy for the judge to decide to which the sheep belonged.

Knowing the customs of the shepherds and the habits of the sheep, the judge ordered the sheep to be brought into court and sent one of the two men into another room, while he told the other to call the sheep and see if it would come to him. But the poor animal not knowing the "voice of a stranger," would not go to him. In the meantime, the other man, who was in the next room, growing impatient, and probably suspecting what was going on, gave a kind of "chuck," upon which the sheep bounded away towards him at once. This "chuck," was the way in which he had been used to call the sheep; and it was at once decided that he was the real owner.

Thus we have a beautiful illustration of St. John, x. 3-5—"He calleth his own sheep by name, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

BE BRIEF.—If you can express yourself, so as to be perfectly understood, in ten words, never use a dozen.

THE HISTORY OF THE



UNITARIAN CHAPEL, MADRAS, INDIA.

UNITARIAN CHAPEL, MADRAS,
INDIA.

THROUGH the kindness of Miss Carpenter we are able to present to our readers a view of our chapel in Madras. This chapel was built several years ago, through the energy and influence of the late Rev. William Roberts, the first Unitarian preacher in India since the first Apostles, and father of our present minister at Madras, William Roberts. The late Mr. Roberts was a native of India, and a convert to the Unitarian christianity, like Rammohun Roy, through the study of the New Testament. We are sure our readers will rejoice to hear, on the testimony of Miss Carpenter and others, that the present minister, Mr. Roberts, is a most disinterested and faithful labourer in our cause.

He is openly and avowedly a Unitarian Christian, and never thinks of tampering with his principles to please the Trinitarian on the one side or the caste prejudices and religious superstitions of India on the other. We recently saw a letter printed in an American paper from India; and speaking, among other things, of our minister at Madras, the writer says:—"Miss Carpenter drew William Roberts to Lord Napier's, and he is preaching Unitarian Christianity bravely since, by letters, which he writes and sends with Unitarian books to the high ones. He is doing much, and is very happy. God bless him." This is true, for we have seen some of his letters addressed to Lady Napier and Major Morris; at the same time intimating his hope that the books they wished to read, which he was then forwarding them, on Unitarianism, "would have a beneficial effect, and bring their minds into harmony with the true light of the Gospel, and to the truth as it is in Jesus our Lord, and thus promote our happiness, both in this world and the world to come."

He reminds Lady Napier that "our Lord and Saviour in his solemn prayer says:—"This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus to be the Christ whom thou hast sent."

In writing to Major Morris, he says:—"Your kind and pleasing conversations regarding Christ, our divine master, having often come across my mind, I have

deemed it my duty to address this to you with every hope that truth will be acceptable. . . . There are some who will not confess the truth, though it be made as clear as it possibly can be. . . . Let us stand by the words of Jesus, which will never lead us wrong, and if we take him for our guide and pattern in religious points, we will have no occasion to accede to creeds and articles of faith, composed by men who were not authorised to add anything to the work 'finished' by our Lord, who is stated to be the 'author and finisher of our faith;' to him alone we should look for edification in regard to our duty in religion, as it had been testified of him from Heaven, 'this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.' If you will consider again and again on the 28th verse of chapter viii. of St. John, which you will find to be the very words of our Lord Jesus, you will be enabled to get a clue of the idea of Unitarians as regards the power and person of Christ, our only 'Master on earth.' By the above subjects I trust that I have laid before you as clearly as possible the two different spirits which prevail among men—the one simple and submissive, the other stiff, wicked, and hard-hearted. And now, in conclusion, I humbly beg to recommend to your kind perusal the accompanying books, written and published by a reverend gentleman (Lindsey), who once held a high post among the advocates of the doctrine of the Trinity, and sacrificed all his prospects on the altar of Christ for the sake of truth and conscience."

It is a fortunate thing we have a man at Madras so able and ready to set forth our views, and who can show, not only to the Europeans who are there, but also the natives, who can never accept the Trinitarian system, that Christianity is a religion any rational and well disposed and pure mind can accept. The influence of Mr. Roberts' preaching and life (being a native) is softening some of the class distinctions among the Indian people. On some occasions his chapel is filled, and he is much respected among the natives. There is a small cemetery belonging to the chapel, which was the gift of Mr. Roberts' father to the Unitarian congregation of Madras. We learn that Mr. Roberts attends some of the meetings of the Religious Reformers

of India, who have very imperfect views of what Christianity is, as they have had little else set before them than our so-called orthodoxy. Mr. Roberts is able to speak to them, and has lent them tracts and books, and encourages them to read the four gospels. His effort is directed to lead them to Christ as a religious teacher, and as a Unitarian his chances of success are great. At one of those meetings, during the present year, one of the Brahmins came forward and confessed in the presence of the assembled people that "no man had a right to reject the doctrine of Christ unless he could prove there was something contrary to reason in it." Mr. Roberts is contemplating printing, in India, the works of his father, and having them distributed among the people. We wish him all success, and may the blessing of God attend his labours among the two hundred millions of people in India.

HELL.

WE have repeatedly affirmed in these columns that the word *Hell*, in the present translation, is very misleading, and that, had the original words been left untranslated, SHEOL and HADES—the place of the dead in general, and GEHENNA, a loathsome place at Jerusalem, that terrible doctrine of a pit of endless fire could never have been sustained from the Scriptures. We are glad to place before our readers the words of a learned clergyman of the Church of England on this question, while treating of the necessity of a new translation. The following are the words of the Rev. Alfred Dewes, M.A., on this subject:—

"As to the etymology of the word there is and can be no question. Gehenna is the Greek form of the Hebrew words that signify 'The Valley of Hinnom.' It was in that valley that the human sacrifices were burnt alive to Moloch. After King Josiah had defiled the place, the refuse and offal out of Jerusalem, and also the dead bodies of atrocious criminals, were cast there. We are told that huge fires were kept continually burning to consume the offal and to purify the air, and that worms were continually devouring the offal which the fires did not consume. Such was Gehenna, or the Valley of Hinnom.

"Did, however, the word Gehenna convey to those who heard our Lord use

it the meaning which the word hell conveys to us? One commentator after another, from Lightfoot downwards, repeating the same statement in a rather pitiable way, tells us that it did so.

"With a view to test the truth of an assertion so continually made, the present writer has searched all the Jewish writings that can with any probability be assigned to any date within three centuries from our Saviour's birth; and the result of the whole examination is this: there are but two passages which even a superficial reader could consider to be corroborative of the assertion that the Jews understood Gehenna to be a place of everlasting punishment.

"In the Mishna, or oral law, which is supposed to have been committed to writing about the close of the second century, Gehenna is mentioned five times or so; but the only passage of the least importance as regards the present question is this: 'The judgment of the ungodly in Gehenna is for twelve months.'

"Bartoloccius, in his 'Bibliotheca Rabbinica,' would gladly prove, were it possible, that the Jews were 'orthodox' in their notions of hell, purgatory, prayers for the dead, &c. Any one who wishes to see what can be said on the subject would do well to turn to it. But he is obliged to confess that they did not believe in a 'material fire,' and they thought such fire as they did believe in would one day be put out. From the doctrines of the Talmuds, he says, that no firm, unshifting dogma can be deduced about the punishment of the guilty, since the propositions which they contain are so variable and unstable.

"Neither, then, from the etymology of the word, nor from the use of it among the Jews, is there the slightest justification for translating the word Gehenna by Hell."

We advise, therefore, all our readers, when they come to the word "*Hell*," and it refers to a place of punishment, to read "Valley of the Son of Hinnom," and it will be much less misleading than the present translation.

UNLUCKY DAYS.—It is a curious fact illustrating the prevalence of popular superstition in Paris, that twenty-five thousand less people ride in the Paris omnibuses on Fridays than other days, owing to the popular impression that Friday is an unlucky day.

THE EARTH'S CHANGES.

The following Indian legend is curious and interesting, as it seems to show that the changes which geology teaches us have taken place on the earth's surface have not escaped the notice of people so comparatively ignorant as the village sages of India:—

"In the golden age, when men spoke the truth, there was one sage so much better than all other men, even as men then were, that he was an especial favourite of Heaven. Tired of the petty cares and follies of mankind, he retired from the great city where he had dwelt before, and lived alone, far from other men, for ages, in the practice of contemplation and the study of God.

"When ages had thus rolled away he bethought him once to return to his native city and see what had become of it. He did so. When he drew near the site of the great city, lo! it was gone, and a beautiful lake, calm, placid, clear, occupied its place. Skiffs were sailing over it; pleasure parties made its waters musical with their songs and instruments; birds were skimming over the waters, and dipping in them occasionally; whilst on the shore the bustle and animation of the chase might be faintly heard in the distant jungles. Drawing near an old boatman, the sage asked, 'My friend, what has become of the city that once stood here?' 'You mistake, reverend sir,' said the boatman, 'there never was any city here; this has always been a lake. But there are cities miles away to the south and west.'

"The sage knew, however, he was not mistaken. There had been a city there; it was gone. Musing as he went, how man and the earth change, while God remains unchangeable, the sage returned to his hermitage, and lived ages again in contemplation. At length he bethought him of visiting again the site of his own city which had become a lake. With that true intuitive knowledge that belonged to the golden age in which he had lived, he found out the site, though all was changed, and now a mighty forest stood where the city had been. He could hear the calls of the monkeys, and the occasional roar of wild beasts issuing from the depths of the wood, whilst the air was alive with the

songs of birds. A numerous cavalcade was approaching, at the head of which rode a young man, who was splendidly dressed. He seemed to be a prince, the others showed him so much deference.

"As the prince drew near the sage asked him, 'Pray, sir, did you ever hear of a city which stood here once—a great and populous city? Though when I was last here it had changed into a lake; perhaps you have heard of that?' 'Never,' said the young prince, condescendingly, 'this has always been a forest, and has always been the chief hunting-ground of my forefathers, the kings of this country. Has it not, my lord?' he asked, turning to an old nobleman in his suite. 'Undoubtedly, your royal highness. The Refuge of the World speaks but the truth,' was the reply of the old courtier. 'When I was young,' said the sage, still addressing the prince, 'I lived in a great and populous city that stood where this forest now stands. Some time after I came here, and the city had become a lake—see, here are some shells; perhaps they were left by the lake—and now it is a forest.' 'The man is, doubtless, mad,' said the young prince, as he rode on. 'Undoubtedly, your royal highness. The Asylum of the World always speaks the truth,' said the old courtier.

"Musing much on the changeableness of earth and man, and the unchangeableness of God, the sage returned to his hermitage, and spent ages again in contemplation. At length he thought he would revisit the site of the old city, where he had seen the lake and the forest. He went, and, as he drew near, he saw a mighty river flowing along, and a great city on its banks, just where the old city had been. Wondering, he entered it, and said to an old man, whom he found in contemplation, 'Do you know when this city was built, or what has become of the forest that stood here?' The old man laughed, and replied, 'There has never been any forest here. This has always been a city. I and my forefathers have lived in this city for ages.'

"The sage turned musing away, and, having reached his hermitage, he threw himself on the ground, exclaiming, 'It is enough, it is enough, O God; when the world and man are constantly changing thus, why should I only be left? I am weary of life.' And so saying, he laid himself down and died."

A REMARKABLE STORY.

THE REWARD OF COURTESY.

THE London correspondent of the *Bel-fast News Letter* vouches for the truth of the following remarkable narrative:

"A short time since an old lady, living in one of the small streets leading out of Albany-street, Regent's Park, entered the shop of a poulterer in the neighbourhood, and purchased a chicken. The tradesman was attentive to her, as such people ought to be, and the lady became a customer, always coming to the shop and giving her own orders. She appeared to be very old, but to have all her faculties about her. One Saturday evening she came when the poulterer happened to be very busy. She said she wished to speak to him, and he asked her to walk into the little parlour behind the shop, and he would come to her the moment he was disengaged. In the parlour she met the daughter of the poulterer, and after some conversation, in the course of which she remarked that the young girl looked ill, and required change of air, she produced a parcel, tied up in paper, and said, 'Give this to your father, as he is busy and cannot come, and I cannot wait. I wish him to take you away for a little change, and here is something that will enable him to do so.' She placed the parcel in the girl's hand, and told her to lock it up in a cupboard to which she pointed. The girl did so. When, some hours subsequently, the shop was closed, and her father came into the parlour to get his supper, she produced the parcel, and gave the message by which it was accompanied. The poulterer untied it, and, to his amazement, the parcel was found to consist of bank notes and gold to the value of £1000. There was also in it an antique gold watch and chain.

"The next day Mr. — hurried round to his customer to thank her, when she desired him to take his daughter out of town for a few days, and on their return to inform her of their arrival. This, of course, was done. A day or two after their return she called at the shop of Mr. —, and said she wished him to come to her house to tea, accompanied by his daughter. As they were about to leave, after partaking of her hospitality, she said to Mr. —, 'I

wish you particularly to call upon me to-morrow morning, and bring with you two respectable persons upon whom you can rely.' The next morning Mr. — attended, accompanied by the curate of the parish and a neighbour. The old lady then said that she was upwards of ninety years of age, and had no relatives living but a cousin, an attorney, who, she alleged had not treated her well, and by whom, she said, she had lost £20,000. She added that she had £25,000 in Consols still left, and that as she felt she would not live long, and was resolved that the attorney should not get anything belonging to her, she had asked Mr. — to attend, with two witnesses, in order that she might transfer to him, for his own absolute use, the £25,000 to which she had referred. She added that she knew very well what she was about, and that by giving him the money while she was alive, instead of bequeathing it to him at her death, he would be saved the payment of legacy duty to the extent of £2000.

"This announcement appeared to be of so singular a nature that the clergyman very properly suggested that a solicitor should be sent for. The man of law came accordingly, and the transfer was duly effected. The old lady's presentiment of approaching dissolution proved to be correct, as she died a few weeks after making this singular disposition of her property. It seems that before her death she had intended to give the money to a chemist with whom she used to deal, but that he had offended her by some inattention to her wishes. The moral of this story is that civility costs nothing, and may sometimes yield a rich reward."

But entirely independent of so large a reward in cash, civility is a constant reward. How often have we all experienced a glow of pleasurable feelings, that could not be bought with silver or gold, by a kind word or a courteous action, which cost us nothing. There is an art of pleasing — of increasing the stock of human happiness with very little self-sacrifice — surely this ought to be practised by us all. We were pleased to hear of this great legacy left to a civil shopkeeper. We have no doubt but the influence of the gift will add to acts of kindness and attention all over London, and the sum of human happiness will be enlarged by this one generous deed.

JUSTICE AND MERCY.

JUSTICE may be defined as that form of divine goodness which gives to all men and to all beings that which is their due, in the nature and fitness of things as created by infinite power and constituted by infinite wisdom. So, then, justice is the regulator, the essential principle that distributes the harmonies of the universe; and in the last analysis it will appear that, in the moral universe, wherever there is discord there is injustice and wherever there is harmony there is justice. Distributive justice is that manifestation of the divine goodness that bestows its rewards upon those that do good, thus encouraging and nurturing all that is good and pure. Punitive or retributive justice is the manifestation of the divine goodness that scourges the stout hearted and the rebellious, that it may discourage whatever is wrong, and restore the harmony that has been temporarily disturbed by the fact that one has withheld from another what is due.

The first and highest principle of justice is that by which God claims the love and obedience of man, saying, "My son give me thy heart." The second is that by virtue of which our neighbour has claims upon our love, and which says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Hence, when man gives his heart to evil instead of God, and loves himself and not his neighbour, he withholds from God, and from man, that which is their due; harmony is thus disturbed, and discord ensues. Justice would restore the harmony by giving to God and man what belongs to him, obedience and love; filial obedience and brotherly love.

In this view the mission of justice is beneficent even when she smites with the rod of judgment; and it is clear that she may thus smite in love, up to the full amount of all that is necessary to wean the heart from evil, secure filial obedience to God, and brotherly love to man. But the moment any law assumes to smite in revenge, or to inflict a penalty that shall place it beyond the power of man to obey God, or to love his fellow man, that moment it loses all the characteristics of justice, and becomes sheer vengeance. It is the "*lex talionis*," the law of revenge, and not the law of justice. The mercy of God is nothing more or less than the mani-

festation, or the application, of the divine goodness to the erring and the penitent. Mercy objects, not that justice should frown upon and scourge the ignorant, the stout hearted, and the rebellious, for thus she knows they must learn wisdom from the things that they suffer, and thus be weaned from the love of evil and of self idolatry, and taught the needful lesson of obedience to God and love of man. It would be weakness and not mercy that would object to this salutary and needful discipline. But, when the ignorance is enlightened and the stout hearted and the rebellious are subdued, and in humble penitence submit, and, turning from the evil, they embrace the good, the ends of justice are answered; its claims all satisfied; the rod of reproof is laid as having done its work; and the divine goodness flows down in healing streams upon the penitent one: that is mercy. Thus at last justice itself is transformed into an angel of mercy, and all is harmony. God has that which belongs to him, filial obedience and love. Our neighbours have what belongs to them, namely, brotherly love; and the penitent one has what belongs to him—mercy and forgiveness for the past; and justice and mercy both are satisfied. Wisdom and power have done their work, truth is justified, and Omnipotent love has conquered.—*Star of the West.*

FIRST CLASS IN CHURCH.—The folly of arbitrary distinctions of birth and rank finds an odd illustration in the following letter to the *Times*. The writer signs himself simply "A Younger Son":—"An incident which occurred to me not many years ago may throw some light on the principles which guide the Chapel Royal officials in their distribution of seats. On entering the chapel-doors on Sunday morning I was stopped by the vergers, who said there was no place for me. I had never attended service in it my life, for I was of a new creation, but I knew that sons of peers had certainly privileges of entry; so with a little pardonable pride of manner I said, 'I am the son of a peer.' 'The eldest son?' asked the vergers, just as if he were a young lady in her second season. 'No,' said I ruefully, 'a younger son only.' 'Then you cannot have a seat until the second lesson,' replied the discriminating vergers. It is out of my power to say whether the offer of a two-shilling piece would have raised me in the estimation of the simple-minded vergers to the level of an eldest son, for I did not try him, but walked away, moralising as I went on the advantages and disadvantages attending the position in this world of an elder and a younger son."

WHAT REV. W. H. BEECHER SAYS OF A MERCENARY ATONEMENT.

"ALL notions, then, of moral government which are founded on notions of material things—and especially on the commercial relations of material things—must needs be imperfect; and though they may be used, and properly used, as figures, yet they must be rebuked the moment they transcend metaphorical uses. Notions of debt, sale, bargains, commercial equivalents, are false and injurious when they are allowed to produce a literal impression in the mind in relation to the divine government, in relation to the divine character, and in regard to the relations of the divine government and the divine character to us. It is not improper to say that men owe to God, if you will understand distinctly that it is not a lawful debt. There cannot be any such thing as debt and credit between two minds. There is no coin by which to express any such thing as that. There are relations which subsist between them, and there is in those relations something which answers to that which we well understand in the transactions of commerce. But it must not be pressed. It certainly must not be the basis of a philosophical, and still less of a theological system.

When, therefore, it is declared that Christ bought us with a price, if you take it as the New Testament teaches it, in the metaphorical sense—if you go on and see that it is a figure, in that it is said that the price was the precious blood of Christ, coined drops, not coined gold, there is no harm; but where men, as they did once almost universally, and as they do now very largely, believe that in the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ there was anything that literally meant paying a debt—paying a debt to the devil, as Origen taught; paying a debt to law, as hundreds of people now teach; paying a debt to justice, as the more refined teachers now say; paying a debt to the public sentiment of the universe, or to God's feelings—it is all mischievous. It is mischievous to introduce into the highest realm of divine thought and divine feeling the low and ill-bred language of the counter and the shop. There is nothing except this remote and figurative application that is true in it. God does not traffic. God is not a merchant, that buys and sells affections and character and emotions. You would be

shocked at the very conception of any trading in love that was mercenary. What is *mercenary* except *merchantable*? and yet, the term has become stigmatised and odious, because men have come to feel that in the realm of thought and feeling—and love above all other feelings—there cannot be any such law of equivalents, or any such buying and selling, as there is in commerce; because they have come to feel that love has its own rules, and does not borrow them from the shop, although it may employ the figures of commerce. The one is higher than the other, and different from it. "And if the difference seems so great among men, how much more apparent will it be as you rise! It is nowhere so clear as in the best things.

As men go up in the scale from a lower to a higher excellence, as they rise from vulgar to finer and nobler feelings and impulses, the more they feel that their actions must differ from the actions which they perform in material things. And if it be so among men, how much more must it be so in God! God never paid any debts, and the atonement of Christ, and the sufferings and death of Christ, are no literal and commercial equivalents for anything, and could not be without degrading the very conception which makes God beautiful and holy.

That Christ suffered for men we all rejoice to believe; but that he literally weighed out, as it were, so much suffering for you, and that he summed up in himself the sum total of all the myriad individual units and items, is a monstrous fantasy which it seems to me could not have been bred except in times when men had not yet explored the real nature of the human mind, and the real relations of feeling to feeling, thought to thought, and character to character. Yet one would think, sometimes, to hear discourses on this subject, and to read the yet imperfect notions of writers concerning it, that God sat behind a counter, and that the vast intercourse and relations of the universe were but so much traffic."

We are glad, in the above language of Mr. Beecher, to find a complete repudiation of that shocking pay-debt theory, with which there is so much trading in the pulpits of our day. We rejoice the simple doctrine of Unitarianism is now being preached in so many pulpits.

TABLET FOR A UNITARIAN CHAPEL.

"AND JESUS ANSWERED HIM: THE FIRST OF ALL THE COMMANDMENTS IS, HEAR, O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND, AND WITH ALL THY STRENGTH; THIS IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT. AND THE SECOND IS LIKE, NAMELY THIS: THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

MARK xii., 29—31.

"BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW THAT YE ARE MY DISCIPLES, IF YE HAVE LOVE ONE TO ANOTHER."

JOHN xiii., 35.

It is not unusual, in places of worship, and in schools, to ornament the walls with texts from the Bible, and we have all of us some favourite texts which we think more particularly appropriate. With this feeling we put the above words before our readers as being more particularly suitable for a Unitarian church. The first text contains three separate thoughts—First, that there is only one God; Second, that we should love him; and, Third, that we should love our neighbour. The first is the fundamental proposition in theology, the second in religion, and the third in morals.

The second text is hardly of equal importance, because in part a repetition of the former. But as in other churches we sometimes see written up, a long creed containing the various opinions which a man ought to hold to be a Christian, in the eyes of that congregation, so it seems desirable that we should write up what Jesus himself put forward as the test of discipleship. The Lord's Prayer, the beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments, are all suitable for the above purpose; but we invite our readers to consider whether any words are more directly to the purpose than those which we have proposed.

The important words with which the first quotation begins, namely, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord," are even now repeated by the pious Jew three times every day. They are called the "*Shemang*," from the Hebrew word which stands at the beginning of the sentence, "*Shemang*," "hear." They well deserve a place in every Unitarian book of prayers.

We are glad to hear of new chapels, both in the north and south of England, in the course of construction. There is no town of our country ought to be without a place of Unitarian christian worship. When a Unitarian family removes into a locality where there is not a chapel, an effort ought to be made at once in that place. Several of our new chapels are the fruit of the zeal of a single family, and what an honourable monument to leave to posterity—a temple of worship to the ONE true God. We propose, in the pages of the CHRISTIAN FREEMAN, of 1868, to have engravings of *eight* of our recently-built chapels, and *four* of our more ancient chapels.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

A GOOD CUSTOM.—There is in St. Petersburg a good old custom, requiring every person taken up drunk, male or female, to sweep the streets the next day for a number of hours. What say the children to have that custom introduced into this country?

A FINE THOUGHT.—We walk here, as it were, in the crypts of life; at times from the great cathedral above us we can hear the organ and the chanting of the choir; we see the light stream through the open door, as some friend goes up before us—and shall we fear to mount the narrow staircase of the grave that leads out of this uncertain twilight into the serene mansions of life eternal?—*Longfellow.*

SIX YEARS' WORK FOR FREEDOM.—Six years have witnessed the emancipation of 25,000,000 serfs in Russia, the liberation of 4,000,000 slaves in the United States, and the virtual manumission of 3,000,000 negroes in Brazil. It is a glorious six years' work—32,000,000 of men restored to freedom, and a curse taken off three of the largest empires in the world. The little that remains to do cannot rest long undone.

ANCIENT MEXICANS.—The ancient Mexicans had a great reverence for flowers. A bouquet was the most acceptable present which an ambassador could take to the court of Montezuma. And yet the religion of this people was one of the most cruel species of idolatry known. Six thousand human victims were annually sacrificed on the altar of Huitzilopochtli, and at the inauguration of the great temple of the god; thirty-three years before the conquest seventy thousand were slaughtered.

BE CHEERFUL.—Do not go back to monkish days, and take an ascetic idea of religion. If you will go back, go back to the Jewish times, when men worshipped largely in festivities; where, when they came to the temple they came with such outbursts of pleasure, such uproarious rejoicings, that the writers who described the tumult which prevailed on such occasions spoke of it as the sound of mighty thunderings and the voice of many waters. The Jews were cheerful. They had not much mirth, but they had great hilarity. The Old Testament is full of cheerfulness, of buoyancy, and commands to it.—*Royal Truths.*

DO LIKEWISE.—The venerable Dr. Hurd, Bishop of Worcester, being in the habit of preaching frequently, had observed a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him some presents. After awhile he missed his humble auditor, and meeting him said, "John, how is it that I do not see you in the aisle as usual?" John, with some hesitation, replied, "My lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the methodists, and I understood their plain language so much better that I have attended there ever since." The bishop put his hand into his pocket and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect, "God bless you, and go where you can receive the greatest profit to your soul." An instance of Episcopalian candour like this is worth recording.

BLESS THE BABY.—Lord Granville, Chancellor of the University of London, remarked on a recent public occasion, that he had been charged by a bishop in the House of Lords with incompetence to discuss the subject of education, on the ground that he had no children. "A recent circumstance," he gravely added, "has placed me in a better position; but I cannot say that it has changed a single view I ever held on the subject of education." That was a neat use to put a baby to.

GOOD HUMOUR.—Good humour is the clear blue sky of the soul, on which every star of talent will shine more clearly, and the sun of genius encounter no vapours in his passage. It is the most exquisite beauty of a fine face—a redeeming grace in a homely one. It is like the green in the landscape—harmonising with every colour, mellowing the glories of the bright, and softening the hue of the dark; or, like a flute in a full concert of instruments, a sound not at first discovered by the ear, yet filling up the breaks in the concord with its soft melody.

HINTS TO YOUNG MEN.—Be economical. No matter if your parents are worth millions, it is not the less proper that you should understand the value of money, and the honest, honourable means of acquiring it. What multitudes of young men, particularly in our city, make shipwreck of reputation and health, and eventually of property, by neglect of this maxim. They are aware that their fathers obtain their wealth by habits of industry, but they are ashamed of the name. They forget that wealth in their country passes rapidly from one to another, and that he who is rich to-day may be poor to-morrow; or that he who relies on wealth amassed by his father may end his days in a pauper house. It is for the young man to say whether by industry and economy he will secure competency and respectability, or by idleness become a worthless beggar and a sponging outcast. Be just. In the course of life a man frequently finds his interest or his opinion crossed by those from whom he had a right to expect better things, and the young men are apt to feel such matters sensibly. Look at their conduct carefully and be just to motives that prompt it. You may find that, were you placed in their position, that course you now condemn would be the proper one for you, and the one you would be under obligations to pursue.

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